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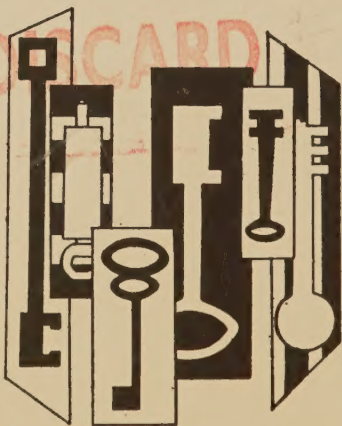
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Riley farm-rhymes



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STEPHENS COLLEGE  
COLUMBIA, MO.

RILEY  
FARM-RHYMES

JAMES  
WHITCOMB RILEY

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INDIANAPOLIS  
THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY  
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Copyright, 1883, 1887, 1888, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1894,  
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by

James Whitcomb Riley

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INSCRIBED WITH ALL GRATEFUL ESTEEM  
TO  
THE GOOD OLD-FASHIONED PEOPLE



*THE deadnin' and the thicket's jes' a-b'ilin' full of  
June,  
From the rattle o' the cricket, to the yallar-ham-  
mer's tune;  
And the catbird in the bottom and the sap-suck on  
the snag,  
Seems ef they can't—od-rot-'em!—jest do nothin'  
else but brag!*

*They's music in the twitter of the bluebird and the  
jay,  
And that sassy little critter jest a-peckin' all the day;  
They's music in the "flicker," and they's music in  
the thrush,  
And they's music in the snicker o' the chipmunk in  
the brush!—*

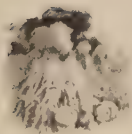
*They's music all around me!—And I go back, in a  
dream  
Sweeter yit than ever found me fast asleep:—And,  
in the stream  
That ust to split the medder whare the dandylions  
growed,  
I stand knee-deep, and redder than the sunset down  
the road.*



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
AT "THE LITERARY" . . . . .	86
CANARY AT THE FARM, A . . . . .	68
COUNTRY PATHWAY, A . . . . .	141
DREAM OF AUTUMN, A . . . . .	47
FESSLER'S BEES . . . . .	22
GRIGGSBY'S STATION . . . . .	78
HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM . . . . .	118
KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE . . . . .	101
"MYLO JONES'S WIFE" . . . . .	50
OLD-FASHIONED ROSES . . . . .	114
OLD OCTOBER . . . . .	110
OLD WINTERS ON THE FARM . . . . .	109
ORCHARD LANDS OF LONG AGO, THE . . . . .	56
ROMANCIN' . . . . .	158
SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY . . . . .	173
TALE OF THE AIRLY DAYS, A . . . . .	152
THOUGHTS FER THE DISCURAGED FARMER . . . . .	41
"TRADIN' JOE" . . . . .	60
TREE-TOAD, THE . . . . .	137
UNCLE DAN'L IN TOWN OVER SUNDAY . . . . .	71
UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE . . . . .	165
US FARMERS IN THE COUNTRY . . . . .	84
VOICE FROM THE FARM, A . . . . .	157
WET-WEATHER TALK . . . . .	38
WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING . . . . .	92
WHEN EARLY MARCH SEEMS MIDDLE MAY . . . . .	149
WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN . . . . .	17
WHEN THE GREEN GITS BACK IN THE TREES . . . . .	34
WHERE THE CHILDREN USED TO PLAY . . . . .	74
WORTERMELON TIME . . . . .	130





## WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN

WHEN the frost is on the punkin and the  
fodder's in the shock,  
And you hear the kyouch and gobble of the struttin'  
turkey-cock,  
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the cluckin' of  
the hens,  
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes on the  
fence;  
O, it's then's the times a feller is a-feelin' at his best,  
With the risin' sun to greet him from a night of  
peaceful rest,  
As he leaves the house, bare-headed, and goes out to  
feed the stock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in  
the shock.

WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN

They's something kindo' harty-like about the  
atmusfere  
When the heat of summer's over and the coolin' fall  
is here—  
Of course we miss the flowers, and the blossums on  
the trees,  
And the mumble of the hummin'-birds and buzzin' o  
the bees;  
But the air's so appetizin'; and the landscape throug  
the haze  
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airy autumn  
days  
Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin' to mock-  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in  
the shock.

The husky, rusty russel of the tossels of the corn  
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as golden a  
the morn;  
The stubble in the furries—kindo' lonesome-like, bu  
still  
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they growe  
to fill;



COLLIERIES, MD.





WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN

The strawstack in the medder, and the reaper in the  
shed;

The hosses in theyr stalls below—the clover over-  
head!—

O, it sets my hart a-clickin' like the tickin' of a clock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in  
the shock!

Then your apples all is getherd, and the ones a feller  
keeps

Is poured around the cellar-floor in red and yellor  
heaps;

And your cider-makin' 's over, and your wimmern-  
folks is through

With their mince and apple-butter, and theyr souse  
and saussage, too! . . .

I don't know how to tell it—but ef sich a thing could  
be

As the Angels wantin' boardin', and they'd call  
around on *me*—

I'd want to 'commodate 'em—all the whole-indurin'  
flock—

When the frost is on the punkin and the fodder's in  
the shock!



## FESSLER'S BEES

“TALKIN’ ’bout yer bees,” says Ike,  
    Speakin’ slow and ser’ous-like,  
“D’ ever tell you ’bout old ‘Bee’—  
Old ‘Bee’ Fessler?” Ike says-he!  
“Might call him a *bee-expert*,  
When it come to handlin’ bees,—  
Roll the sleeves up of his shirt  
And wade in amongst the trees  
Where a swarm ’u’d settle, and—  
Blam’dest man on top of dirt!—  
Rake ’em with his naked hand  
Right back in the hive ag’in,  
Jes’ as easy as you please!  
Nary bee ’at split the breeze  
Ever jabbed a stinger in

## FESSLER'S BEES

Old 'Bee' Fessler—jes' in fun,  
Er in *airnest*—nary one!—  
Couldn't agg one *on* to, nuther,  
Ary one way er the other!

"Old 'Bee' Fessler," Ike says-he,  
"Made a speshyality  
Jes' o' bees; and built a shed—  
Len'th about a half a mild!  
Had about a *thousan'* head  
O' hives, I reckon—tame and wild!  
Durndest buzzin' ever wuz—  
Wuss'n telegraph-poles does  
When they're sockin' home the news  
Tight as they kin let 'er loose!  
Visitors rag out and come  
Clean from town to hear 'em hum,  
And stop at the kivered bridge;  
But wuz some 'u'd cross the ridge  
Allus, and go clos'ter—so 's  
They could *see* 'em hum, I s'pose!  
'Peared-like strangers down that track  
Allus met folks comin' back  
Lookin' extry fat and hearty  
Fer a city picnic party!

## FESSLER'S BEES

“’Fore he went to Floridy,  
Old ‘Bee’ Fessler,” Ike says—he—  
“Old ‘Bee’ Fessler couldn’t bide  
Childern on his place,” says Ike.  
“Yit, fer all, they’d climb inside  
And tromp round there, keerless-like,  
In their bare feet. ‘Bee’ could tell  
Ev’ry town-boy by his yell—  
So ’s ’at when they bounced the fence,  
Didn’t make no difference!  
*He’d* jes’ git down on one knee  
In the grass and pat the bee!—  
And, ef ’t ’adn’t stayed stuck in,  
Fess’ ’u’d set the sting ag’in,  
’N’ potter off, and wait around  
Fer the old famillyer sound.  
Allus boys there, more or less,  
Scootin’ round the premises!  
When the buckwheat wuz in bloom,  
Lawzy! how them bees ’u’d boom  
Round the boys ’at crossed that way  
Fer the crick on Saturday!  
Never seemed to me su’prisin’  
’At the sting o’ bees ’uz p’izin!

## FESSLER'S BEES

“‘Fore he went to Floridy,”  
Ike says, “nothin’ ’bout a bee  
’At old Fessler didn’t know,—  
W’y, it jes’ ’peared-like ’at he  
Knowed their language, high and low:  
Claimed he told jes’ by their buzz  
What their wants and wishes wuz!  
Peek in them-air little holes  
Round the porches o’ the hive—  
Drat their pesky little souls!—  
Could ’a’ skinned the man alive!  
Bore right in there with his thumb,  
And squat down and scrape the gum  
Outen ev’ry hole, and blow  
’N’ bresh the crumbs off, don’t you know!  
Take the roof off, and slide back  
Them-air glass concerns they pack  
Full o’ honey, and jes’ lean  
’N’ grabble ’mongst ’em fer the queen!  
Fetch her out and *show* you to her—  
Jes’, you might say, *interview* her!

“Year er two,” says Ike, says-he,  
“‘Fore he went to Floridy,

## FESSLER'S BEES

Fessler struck the theory,  
*Honey* was the same as *love*—  
You could make it day and night:  
Said them bees o' his could be  
Got jes' twic't the work out of  
Ef a feller managed right.  
He contended ef bees found  
*Blossoms* all the year around,  
He could git 'em down at once  
To work all the *winter* months  
Same as *summer*. So, one fall,  
When their summer's work wuz done,  
'Bee' turns in and robs 'em all;  
Loads the hives then, one by one,  
On the cyars, and 'lowed he'd see  
Ef bees loafed in *Floridy*!  
Said he bet he'd know the reason  
Ef *his* didn't work that season!

"And," says Ike, "it's jes'," says-he,  
"Like old Fessler says to me:  
'Any man kin fool a *bee*,  
Git him down in *Floridy*!'  
'Peared at fust, as ole 'Bee' said,  
Fer to kind o' turn their head



COLUMBIA, MD





## FESSLER'S BEES

Fer a spell; but, bless you! they  
Didn't lose a half a day  
Altogether!—Jes' lit in  
Them-air tropics, and them-air  
Cacktusses a-ripen-nin',  
'N' magnolyers, and sweet peas,  
'N' 'simmon and pineapple trees,  
'N' ripe bananers, here and there,  
'N' dates a-danglin' in the breeze,  
'N' figs and reezins ev'rywhere,  
All waitin' jes' fer Fessler's bees!  
'N' Fessler's bees, with gaumy wings,  
A-gittin' down and *whoopin'* things!—  
Fessler kind o' overseein'  
'Em, and sort o' '*hee-o-heein'*'!

“'Fore he went to *Floridy*,  
Old 'Bee' Fessler,” Ike says-he,  
“Wuzn't counted, jes' to say,  
Mean er or'n'ry anyway;  
On'y ev'ry 'tarnel dime  
'At 'u'd pass him on the road  
He'd ketch up with, ev'ry time;  
And no mortal ever knowed

## FESSLER'S BEES

Him to spend a copper cent—  
'Less on some fool-'*speriment*  
With them *bees*—like that-un he  
Played on 'em in Floridy.  
Fess', of course, *he* tuck his ease,  
But 'twus *bilious* on the bees!  
Sweat, you know, 'u'd jes' stand out  
On their *forreds*—pant and groan,  
And grunt round and limp about!—  
And old 'Bee,' o' course, a-knowin'  
'Twuzn't no fair shake to play  
On them pore dumb insecks, ner  
To abuse 'em thataway.  
*Bees* has rights, I'm here to say,  
And that's all they ast him fer!  
Man as mean as *that*, jes' 'pears,  
Could 'a' worked bees on the sheers!  
Cleared big money—well, I guess,  
'Bee' shipped honey, more er less,  
Into ev'ry state, perhaps,  
Ever putt down in the maps!

"But by time he fetched 'em back  
In the Spring ag'in," says Ike,

## FESSLER'S BEES

“They wuz actin’ s’picious-like:  
Though they ’peared to lost the track  
O’ ev’rything they saw er heard,  
They’d lay round the porch, and gap’  
At their shadders in the sun,  
Do-less like, ontel some bird  
Suddently ’u’d maybe drap  
In a bloomin’ churry tree,  
Twitterin’ a tune ’at run  
In their minds familiously!  
They’d revive up, kind o’, then,  
Like they argied: ‘Well, it’s be’n  
The most longest summer we  
Ever saw er want to see!  
Must be *right*, though, er *old* “*Bee*”  
’U’d notify us!’ they says-ee;  
And they’d sort o’ square their chin  
And git down to work ag’in—  
Moanin’ round their honey-makin’,  
Kind o’ like their head was achin’,  
*Tetchin’* fer to see how they  
Trusted Fessler thataway—  
Him a-lazin’ round, and smirkin’  
To hisse’f to see ’em workin’!

## FESSLER'S BEES

"But old 'Bee,' " says Ike, says-he,—  
"Now where is he? *Where's* he gone?  
Where's the head he helt so free?  
Where's his pride and vanity?  
What's his hopes a-restin' on?—  
Never knowed a man," says Ike,  
"Take advantage of a bee,  
'At affliction didn't strike  
Round in that vicinity!  
Sinners allus suffers some,  
And *old Fessler's* reck'nin' come!  
That-air man to-day is jes'  
Like the grass 'at Scriptur' says  
Cometh up, and then turns in  
And jes' gits cut down ag'in!

"Old 'Bee' Fessler," Ike says-he,  
"Says, last fall, says he to me—  
'Ike,' says he, 'them bees has jes'  
Ciphered out my or'n'riness!  
Nary bee in ary swarm  
On the whole endurin' farm  
Won't have nothin' more to do  
With a man as mean as I've

## FESSLER'S BEES

Be'n to them, last year er two!  
Nary bee in ary hive  
But'll turn his face away,  
Like they ort, whenever they  
Hear my footprints drawin' nigh!"  
And old 'Bee,' he'd sort o' shy  
Round oneasy in his cheer,  
Wipe his eyes, and yit the sap,  
Spite o' all, 'u'd haf' to drap,  
As he wound up: 'Wouldn't keer  
Quite so much ef they'd jes' light  
In and settle things up right,  
Like they ort; but—blame the thing!—  
'Pears-like they won't even *sting*!  
*Pepper* me, the way I felt,  
And I'd thank 'em, ev'ry welt!"  
And as miz'able and mean  
As 'Bee' looked, ef you'd 'a' seen  
Them-air hungry eyes," says Ike,  
"You'd fergive him, more'n like.

"Wisht you had 'a' knowed old 'Bee'  
'Fore he went to Floridy!"



## WHEN THE GREEN GITS BACK IN THE TREES

**I**N Spring, when the green gits back in the trees,  
And the sun comes out and *stays*,  
And yer boots pulls on with a good tight squeeze,  
And you think of yer bare-foot days;  
When you *ort* to work and you want to *not*,  
And you and yer wife agrees  
It's time to spade up the garden-lot,  
When the green gits back in the trees—  
Well! work is the least o' *my* idees  
When the green, you know, gits back in the  
trees!



STEPHEN'S GARDEN  
CULTIVATING 91





## WHEN THE GREEN GITS BACK IN THE TREES

When the green gits back in the trees, and bees  
Is a-buzzin' aroun' ag'in

In that kind of a lazy go-as-you-please

Old gait they bum roun' in;

When the groun's all bald whare the hay-rick  
stood,

And the crick's riz, and the breeze

Coaxes the bloom in the old dogwood,

And the green gits back in the trees,—

I like, as I say, in sich scenes as these,

The time when the green gits back in the trees!

When the whole tail-feathers o' Wintertime

Is all pulled out and gone!

And the sap it thaws and begins to climb,

And the swet it starts out on

A feller's forred, a-gittin' down

At the old spring on his knees—

I kindo' like jest a-loaferin' roun'

When the green gits back in the trees—

Jest a-potterin' roun' as I—durn—please—

When the green, you know, gits back in the  
trees!



## WET-WEATHER TALK

**I**T hain't no use to grumble and complane;  
It's jest as cheap and easy to rejoice.—  
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,  
W'y, rain's my choice.

Men ginerly, to all intents—

Although they're apt to grumble some—  
Puts most theyr trust in Providence,  
And takes things as they come—  
That is, the commonality  
Of men that's lived as long as me  
Has watched the world enough to learn  
They're not the boss of this concern.

## WET-WEATHER TALK

With *some*, of course, it's different—

I've saw *young* men that knowed it all,  
And didn't like the way things went

On this terrestchul ball;—

But all the same, the rain, some way,  
Rained jest as hard on picnic day;  
Er, when they raily *wanted* it,  
It mayby wouldn't rain a bit!

In this existunce, dry and wet

Will overtake the best of men—  
Some little skift o' clouds'll shet

The sun off now and then.—

And mayby, whilse you're wundern who  
You've fool-like lent your umbrell' to,  
And *want* it—out'll pop the sun,  
And you'll be glad you hain't got none!

It aggervates the farmers, too—

They's too much wet, er too much sun,  
Er work, er waitin' round to do

Before the plowin' 's done:

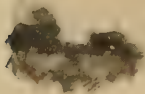
And mayby, like as not, the wheat,  
Jest as it's lookin' hard to beat,

## WET-WEATHER TALK

Will ketch the storm—and jest about  
The time the corn's a-jintin' out.

These-here *cy-clones* a-foolin' round—  
And back'ard crops!—and wind and rain!—  
And yit the corn that's wallerd down  
May elbow up again!—  
They hain't no sense, as I can see,  
Fer mortuls, sich as us, to be  
A-faultin' Natchur's wise intents,  
And lockin' horns with Providence!

It hain't no use to grumble and complane;  
It's jest as cheap and easy to rejoice.—  
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,  
W'y, rain's my choice.





## THOUGHTS FER THE DISCOURAGED FARMER

THE summer winds is sniffin' round the bloomin'  
locus' trees ;

And the clover in the pastur' is a big day fer the bees,  
And they been a-swiggin' honey, above board and on  
the sly,

Tel they stutter in theyr buzzin' and stagger as they  
fly.

The flicker on the fence-rail 'pears to jest spit on his  
wings

And roll up his feathers, by the sassy way he sings ;  
And the hoss-fly is a-whettin'-up his forelegs fer biz,  
And the off-mare is a-switchin' all of her tale they is.

THOUGHTS FER THE DISCURAGED FARMER

You can hear the blackbirds jawin' as they foller up  
the plow—

Oh, theyr bound to git theyr brekfast, and theyr not  
a-carin' how;

So they quarrel in the furries, and they quarrel on  
the wing—

But theyr peaceabler in pot-pies than any other  
thing:

And it's when I git my shotgun drawed up in stiddy  
rest,

She's as full of tribbellation as a yellor-jacket's nest;  
And a few shots before dinner, when the sun's a-  
shinin' right,

Seems to kindo'-sorto' sharpen up a feller's appetite!

They's been a heap o' rain, but the sun's out to-day,  
And the clouds of the wet spell is all cleared away,  
And the woods is all the greener, and the grass is  
greener still;

It may rain again to-morry, but I don't think it will.  
Some says the crops is ruined, and the corn's  
drownded out,

And propaha-sy the wheat will be a failure, without  
doubt;



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## THOUGHTS FER THE DISCURAGED FARMER

But the kind Providence that has never failed us  
yet,  
Will be on hands onc't more at the 'leventh hour,  
I bet!

Does the medder-lark complane, as he swims high  
and dry

Through the waves of the wind and the blue of the  
sky?

Does the quail set up and whissel in a disappointed  
way,

Er hang his head in silunce, and sorrow all the day?  
Is the chipmuck's health a-failin'?—Does he walk,  
er does he run?

Don't the buzzards ooze around up thare just like  
they've allus done?

Is they anything the matter with the rooster's lungs  
er voice?

Ort a mortul be complainin' when dumb animals  
rejoice?

Then let us, one and all, be contentud with our lot;  
The June is here this morning, and the sun is shining  
hot.

## THOUGHTS FER THE DISCOURAGED FARMER

Oh! let us fill our harts up with the glory of the day,  
And banish ev'ry doubt and care and sorrow fur  
away!

Whatever be our station, with Providence fer guide,  
Sich fine circumstances ort to make us satisfied;  
Fer the world is full of roses, and the roses full of  
dew,

And the dew is full of heavenly love that drips fer  
me and you.





## A DREAM OF AUTUMN

**M**ELLOW hazes, lowly trailing  
Over wood and meadow, veiling  
Somber skies, with wild fowl sailing  
Sailor-like to foreign lands;  
And the north wind overleaping  
Summer's brink, and flood-like sweeping  
Wrecks of roses where the weeping-  
Willows wring their helpless hands.

## A DREAM OF AUTUMN

Flared, like Titan torches flinging  
Flakes of flame and embers, springing  
From the vale, the trees stand swinging  
    In the moaning atmosphere;  
While in dead'ning lands the lowing  
Of the cattle, sadder growing,  
Fills the sense to overflowing  
    With the sorrow of the year.

Sorrowfully, yet the sweeter  
Sings the brook in rippled meter  
Under boughs that lithely teeter  
    Lorn birds, answering from the shores  
Through the viny, shady-shiny  
Interspaces, shot with tiny  
Flying motes that fleck the winy  
    Wave-engraved sycamores.

Fields of ragged stubble, wrangled  
With rank weeds, and shocks of tangled  
Corn, with crests like rent plumes dangled  
    Over Harvest's battle-plain;

## A DREAM OF AUTUMN

And the sudden whir and whistle  
Of the quail that, like a missile,  
Whizzes over thorn and thistle,  
    And, a missile, drops again.

Muffled voices, hid in thickets  
Where the redbird stops to stick its  
Ruddy beak betwixt the pickets  
    Of the truant's rustic trap;  
And the sound of laughter ringing  
Where, within the wild vine swinging,  
Climb Bacchante's schoolmates, flinging  
    Purple clusters in her lap.

Rich as wine, the sunset flashes  
Round the tilted world, and dashes  
Up the sloping West, and splashes  
    Red foam over sky and sea—  
Till my dream of Autumn, paling  
In the splendor all-prevailing,  
Like a sallow leaf goes sailing  
    Down the silence solemnly.



## “MYLO JONES’S WIFE”

“**M**YLO JONES’S wife” was all  
I heerd, mighty near, last Fall—  
Visitun relations down  
T’other side of Morgantown!  
Mylo Jones’s wife she does  
This and that, and “those” and “thus”—  
Can’t ’bide babies in her sight—  
Ner no childern, day and night,  
Whoopin’ round the premises—  
*Ner no nothin’ else, I guess!*



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COLUMBIA, MD.





“MYLO JONES’S WIFE”

Mylo Jones’s wife she ’lows  
She’s the boss of her own house!—  
Mylo—consequences is—  
Stays whare things seem *some* like *his*,—  
Uses, mostly, with the stock—  
Coaxin’ “Old Kate” not to balk,  
Ner kick hoss-flies’ branes out, ner  
Act, I s’pose, so much like *her*!  
Yit the wimmern-folks tells you  
She’s *perfection*.—Yes they do!

Mylo’s wife she says she’s found  
Home hain’t home with *men-folks* round  
When they’s work like *hern to do*—  
Picklin’ pears and *butchern*, too,  
And a-rendern lard, and then  
Cookin’ fer a pack of men  
To come trackin’ up the flore  
*She’s* scrubbed *tel* she’ll scrub no *more*!—  
Yit she’d keep things clean ef they  
Made her scrub tel Judgmunt Day!

Mylo Jones’s wife she sews  
Carpet-rags and patches clothes

“MYLO JONES’S WIFE”

Jest year *in* and *out*!—and yit  
Whare’s the livin’ use of it?  
She asts Mylo that.—And he  
Gits back whare he’d ruther be,  
With his team;—jest *plows*—and don’t  
Never sware—like some folks won’t!  
Think ef *he’d cut loose*, I gum!  
’D he’p his heavenly chances some!

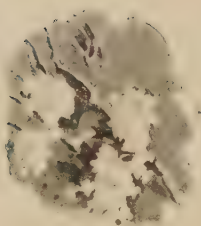
Mylo’s wife don’t see no use,  
Ner no reason ner excuse  
Fer his pore relations to  
Hang round like they allus do!  
Thare ’bout onc’t a year—and *she*—  
She jest *ga’nts* ’em, folks tells me,  
On spiced pears!—Pass Mylo one,  
He says “No, he don’t chuse none!”  
Workin’men like Mylo they  
’D ort to have *meat* ev’ry day!

Dad-burn Mylo Jones’s wife!  
Ruther rake a blame caseknife  
’Crost my wizen than to see  
Sich a womern rulin’ *me*!—

"MYLO JONES'S WIFE"

Ruther take and turn in and  
Raise a fool mule-colt by hand!  
*Mylo*, though—od-rot the man!—  
Jest keeps ca'm—like some folks *can*—  
And 'lows sich as her, I s'pose,  
Is *Man's he'pmeet!*—Mercy knows!





## THE ORCHARD LANDS OF LONG AGO

THE orchard lands of Long Ago!  
O drowsy winds, awake, and blow  
The snowy blossoms back to me,  
And all the buds that used to be!  
Blow back along the grassy ways  
Of truant feet, and lift the haze  
Of happy summer from the trees  
That trail their tresses in the seas  
Of grain that float and overflow  
The orchard lands of Long Ago!

STEPHEN L. L. L. L.  
COLUMBIA, MO.







## THE ORCHARD LANDS OF LONG AGO

Blow back the melody that slips  
In lazy laughter from the lips  
That marvel much if any kiss  
Is sweeter than the apple's is.  
Blow back the twitter of the birds—  
The lisp, the titter, and the words  
Of merriment that found the shine  
Of summer-time a glorious wine  
That drenched the leaves that loved it so,  
In orchard lands of Long Ago!

O memory! alight and sing  
Where rosy-bellied pippins cling,  
And golden russets glint and gleam,  
As, in the old Arabian dream,  
The fruits of that enchanted tree  
The glad Aladdin robbed for me!  
And, drowsy winds, awake and fan  
My blood as when it overran  
A heart ripe as the apples grow  
In orchard lands of Long Ago!

## “TRADIN’ JOE”

I’M one o’ these cur’ous kind o’ chaps  
I You think you know when you don’t, perhaps!  
I hain’t no fool—ner I don’t p’tend  
To be so smart I could rickommend  
Myself fer a *congerssman*, my friend!—  
But I’m kind o’ betwixt-and-between, you know,—  
One o’ these fellers ’at folks call “slow.”  
And I’ll say jest here I’m kind o’ queer  
Regardin’ things ’at I *see* and *hear*,—  
Fer I’m *thick* o’ hearin’ *sometimes*, and  
It’s hard to git me to understand;  
But other times it hain’t, you bet!  
Fer I don’t sleep with both eyes shet!

I’ve swapped a power in stock, and so  
The neighbors calls me “Tradin’ Joe”—  
And I’m goin’ to tell you ’bout a trade,—  
And one o’ the best I ever made:

## “TRADIN’ JOE”

Folks has gone so fur’s to say  
’At I’m well fixed, in a *worldly* way,  
And *bein’* so, and a *widower*,  
It’s not su’prisin’, as you’ll infer,  
I’m purty handy among the sect—  
Widders, especially, rickollect!  
And I won’t deny that along o’ late  
I’ve hankered a heap fer the married state—  
But some way o’ ’nother the longer we wait  
The harder it is to discover a mate.

Marshall Thomas,—a friend o’ mine,  
Doin’ some in the tradin’ line,  
But a’most too *young* to know it all—  
On’y at *picnics* er some *ball*!—  
Says to me, in a banterin’ way,  
As we was a-loadin’ stock one day,—  
“You’re a-huntin’ a wife, and I want you to see  
My girl’s mother, at Kankakee!—  
She hain’t over forty—good-lookin’ and spry,  
And jest the woman to fill your eye!  
And I’m a-goin’ there Sund’y,—and now,” says he,  
“I want to take you along with *me*;  
And you marry *her*, and,” he says, “by ’shaw!  
You’ll hev me fer yer son-in-law!”

## "TRADIN' JOE"

I studied a while, and says I, "Well, I'll  
First have to see ef she suits my style;  
And ef she does, you kin bet your life  
Your mother-in-law will be my wife!"  
Well, Sund'y come; and I fixed up some—  
Putt on a collar—I did, by gum!—  
Got down my "plug," and my satin vest—  
(You wouldn't know me to see me dressed!—  
But any one knows ef you got the clothes  
You kin go in the crowd wher' the best of 'em goes!)  
And I greeced my boots, and combed my hair  
Keerfully over the bald place there;  
And Marshall Thomas and me that day  
Eat our dinners with Widder Gray  
And her girl Han'! . . .

Well, jest a glance  
O' the widder's smilin' countenance,  
A-cuttin' up chicken and big pot-pies,  
Would make a man hungry in Paradise!  
And passin' p'serves and jelly and cake  
'At would make an *angel's* appetite ache!—  
Pourin' out coffee as yaller as gold—  
Twic't as much as the cup could hold—

STITCHES - COLUMBIA, MO.





## “TRADIN’ JOE”

La! it was rich!—And then she’d say,  
“Take some o’ *this!*” in her coaxin’ way,  
Tell ef I’d been a hoss I’d ‘a’ *foundedered*, shore,  
And jest dropped dead on her white-oak floor!  
Well, the way I talked would ‘a’ done you good,  
Ef you’d been there to ‘a’ understood;  
Tel I noticed Hanner and Marshall, they  
Was a-noticin’ me in a cur’ous way;  
So I says to myse’f, says I, “Now, Joe,  
The best thing fer you is to jest go slow!”  
And I simmered down, and let them do  
The bulk o’ the talkin’ the evening through.  
And Marshall was still in a talkative gait  
When he left, that evening—tolable late.  
“How do you like her?” he says to me;  
Says I, “She suits, to a ‘t-y-Tee!’”  
And then I ast how matters stood  
With him in the *opposite* neighborhood?  
“Bully!” he says; “I ruther guess  
I’ll finally git her to say the ‘yes.’  
I named it to her to-night, and she  
Kind o’ smiled, and said ‘*she’d see*’—  
And that’s a purty good sign!” says he:  
“Yes,” says I, “you’re ahead o’ *me!*”

## “TRADIN’ JOE”

And then he laughed, and said, “*Go in!*”  
And patted me on the shoulder ag’in.  
Well, ever sense then I’ve been ridin’ a good  
Deal through the Kankakee neighborhood;  
And I make it convenient sometimes to stop  
And hitch a few minutes, and kind o’ drop  
In at the widder’s, and talk o’ the crop  
And one thing o’ ’nother. And week afore last  
The notion struck me, as I drove past,  
I’d stop at the place and state my case—  
Might as well do it at first as last!

I felt first-rate; so I hitched at the gate,  
And went up to the house; and, strange to relate,  
*Marshall Thomas* had dropped in, *too*.—  
“Glad to see you, sir, how do you do?”  
He says, says he! Well—it *sounded queer*;  
And when Han’ told me to take a cheer,  
Marshall got up and putt out o’ the room—  
And motioned his hand fer the *widder* to come.  
I didn’t say nothin’ fer quite a spell,  
But thinks I to myse’f, “There’s a dog in the well!”  
And Han’ *she* smiled so cur’ous at me—  
Says I, “What’s up?” And she says, says she,



“TRADIN’ JOE”

“Marshall’s been at me to marry ag’in,  
And I told him ‘no,’ jest as you come in.”  
Well, somepin’ o’ ’nother in that girl’s voice  
Says to me, “Joseph, here’s your choice!”  
And another minute her guileless breast  
Was lovin’ly throbbin’ ag’in’ my vest!—  
And then I kissed her, and heerd a smack  
Come like a’ echo a-flutterin’ back,  
And we looked around, and in full view  
Marshall was kissin’ the widder, too!  
Well, we all of us laughed, in our glad su’prise,  
Tel the tears come *a-streamin’* out of our eyes!  
And when Marsh said “’Twas the squarest trade  
That ever me and him had made,”  
We both shuck hands, ’y jucks! and swore  
We’d stick together ferevermore.  
And old Squire Chipman tuck us the trip:  
And Marshall and me’s in pardnership!



## A CANARY AT THE FARM

FOLKS has be'n to town, and Sahry  
Fetched 'er home a pet canary,—  
And of all the blame', contrary,  
    Aggervatin' things alive!  
I love music—that's I love it  
When it's *free*—and plenty of it;—  
But I kindo' git above it,  
    At a dollar-eighty-five!

Reason's plain as I'm a-sayin',—  
Jes' the idy, now, o' layin'  
Out yer money, and a-payin'  
    Fer a willer-cage and bird,  
When the medder-larks is wingin'  
Round you, and the woods is ringin'  
With the beautifullest singin'  
    That a mortal ever heard!

Sahry's sot, tho'.—So I tell her  
He's a purty little feller,  
With his wings o' creamy-yeller,  
    And his eyes keen as a cat;  
And the twitter o' the critter  
'Pears to absolutely glitter!  
Guess I'll haf to go and git her  
    A high-priceter cage 'n that!

STEPHENS COLLECTION  
COLUMBIA, MD.







## UNCLE DAN'L IN TOWN OVER SUNDAY

**I** CAN'T git used to city ways—  
Ner never could, I' bet my hat!  
Jevver know jes' whur I was raised?—  
Raised on a farm! D' ever tell you that?  
Was undoubtatly, I declare!  
And now, on Sunday—fun to spare  
Around a farm! Why, jes' to set  
Up on the top three-cornered rail  
Of Pap's ole place, nigh La Fayette,  
I'd swap my soul off, hide and tail!

## UNCLE DAN'L IN TOWN OVER SUNDAY

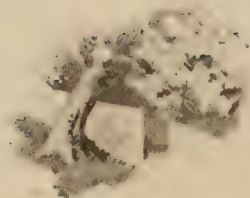
You fellers in the city here,  
You don't know nothin'!—S'pose to-day,  
This clatterin' Sunday, you waked up  
Without no jinglin'-janglin' bells,  
Ner rattlin' of the milkman's cup,  
Ner any swarm of screechin' birds  
Like these here English swallers—S'pose  
Ut you could miss all noise like those,  
And git shet o' thinkin' of 'em afterwerds,  
And then, in the country, wake and hear  
Nothin' but silence—wake and see  
Nothin' but green woods fur and near?—  
What sort o' Sunday would that be? . . .  
Wisht I hed you home with me!

Now think! The laziest of all days—  
To git up any time—er sleep—  
Er jes' lay round and watch the haze  
A-dancin' 'crost the wheat, and keep  
My pipe a-goern laisurely,  
And puff and whiff as pleases me—  
And ef I leave a trail of smoke  
Clean through the house, no one to say,  
“Wah! throw that nasty thing away;  
Hev some regyard fer decency!”

## UNCLE DAN'L IN TOWN OVER SUNDAY

To walk round barefoot, if you choose;  
Er saw the fiddle—er dig some bait  
And go a-fishin'—er pitch hoss shoes  
Out in the shade somewhurs, and wait  
For dinner-time, with an appetite  
Ut folks in town cain't equal quite!  
To laze around the barn and poke  
Fer hens' nests—er git up a match  
Betwixt the boys, and watch 'em scratch  
And rassle round, and sweat and swear  
And quarrel to their hearts' content;  
And me a-jes' a-settin' there  
A-hatchin' out more devilment!  
What sort o' Sunday would that be? . . .  
Wisht I hed you home with me!





## WHERE THE CHILDREN USED TO PLAY

**T**HE old farm-home is Mother's yet and mine,  
And filled it is with plenty and to spare,—  
But we are lonely here in life's decline,  
Though fortune smiles around us everywhere:  
We look across the gold  
Of the harvests, as of old—  
The corn, the fragrant clover, and the hay:  
But most we turn our gaze,  
As with eyes of other days,  
To the orchard where the children used to play.



STEPHENS COLLEGE  
COLUMBIA, MO.





## WHERE THE CHILDREN USED TO PLAY

*From our life's full measure  
And rich hoard of worldly treasure  
We often turn our weary eyes away,  
And hand in hand we wander  
Down the old path winding yonder  
To the orchard where the children used to play.*

Our sloping pasture-lands are filled with herbs;  
The barn and granary-bins are bulging o'er:  
The grove's a paradise of singing birds—  
The woodland brook leaps laughing by the door;  
Yet lonely, lonely still,  
Let us prosper as we will,  
Our old hearts seem so empty everyway—  
We can only through a mist  
See the faces we have kissed  
In the orchard where the children used to play.

*From our life's full measure  
And rich hoard of worldly treasure  
We often turn our weary eyes away,  
And hand in hand we wander  
Down the old path winding yonder  
To the orchard where the children used to play.*



## GRIGGSBY'S STATION

PAP'S got his pattent-right, and rich as all  
creation;

But where's the peace and comfort that we all  
had before?

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station—

Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!

The likes of us a-livin' here! It's jest a mortal pity  
To see us in this great big house, with cyarpets on  
the stairs,

And the pump right in the kitchen! And the city!  
city! city!—

And nothin' but the city all around us ever'wheres!

## GRIGGSBY'S STATION

Climb clean above the roof and look from the steeple,  
And never see a robin, nor a beech or ellow tree!  
And right here in ear-shot of at least a thousan'  
people,  
And none that neighbors with us or we want to go  
and see!

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station—  
Back where the latch-string's a-hangin' from the  
door,  
And ever' neighbor round the place is dear as a  
relation—

Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!  
I want to see the Wiggenses, the whole kit-and-bilin',  
A-drivin' up from Shallor Ford to stay the Sunday  
through;  
And I want to see 'em hitchin' at their son-in-law's  
and pilin'  
Out there at 'Lizy Ellen's like they ust to do!

I want to see the piece-quilts the Jones girls is  
makin';  
And I want to pester Laury 'bout their freckled  
hired hand,

## GRIGGSBY'S STATION

And joke her 'bout the widower she come purt' nigh  
a-takin',

Till her Pap got his pension 'lowed in time to save  
his land.

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station—

Back where they's nothin' aggervatin' any more,  
Shet away safe in the woods around the old  
location—

Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!

I want to see Marindy and he'p her with her sewin',  
And hear her talk so lovin' of her man that's dead  
and gone,

And stand up with Emanuel to show me how he's  
growin',

And smile as I have saw her 'fore she putt her  
mournin' on.

And I want to see the Samples, on the old lower  
eighty,

When John, our oldest boy, he was tuk and  
burried—for

His own sake and Katy's,—and I want to cry with  
Katy

As she reads all his letters over, writ from The  
War.

STEPHENS COLLECTION  
COLUMBIA COLLEGE







## GRIGGSBY'S STATION

What's in all this grand life and high situation,  
And nary pink nor hollyhawk a-bloomin' at the  
door?—

Le's go a-visitin' back to Griggsby's Station—  
Back where we ust to be so happy and so pore!





## US FARMERS IN THE COUNTRY

US farmers in the country, as the seasons go and  
come,

Is purty much like other folks,—we're apt to grumble  
some!

The Spring's too back'ard fer us, er to for'ard—ary  
one—

We'll jaw about it anyhow, and have our way er  
none!

The thaw's set in too suddent; er frost's stayed in  
the soil

Too long to give the wheat a chance, and crops is  
bound to spoil!

The weather's eether most too mild, er too outrage-  
ous rough,

And altogether too much rain, er not half rain  
enough!

## US FARMERS IN THE COUNTRY

Now what I'd like and what you'd like is plane enough  
to see:

It's jest to have old Providence drop round on you  
and me

And ast us what our views is first, regardin' shine  
er rain,

And post 'em when to shet her off, er let her on  
again!

And yit I'd ruther, after all—consider'n' other chores  
I' got on hands, a-tendin' both to my affares and  
yours—

I'd ruther miss the blame I'd git, a-rulin' things up  
thare,

And spend my extry time in praise and gratitude  
and prayer.

## AT "THE LITERARY"

FOLKS in town, I reckon, thinks  
They git all the fun they air  
Runnin' loose 'round!—but, 'y jinks!  
We' got fun, and fun to spare,  
Right out here amongst the ash  
And oak timber ever'where!  
Some folks else kin cut a dash  
'Sides town-people, don't fergit!—  
'Specially in *winter*-time,  
When they's snow, and roads is fit.  
In them circumstances I'm  
Resig-nated to my lot—  
Which putts me in mind o' what  
      'S called "The Literary."

Us folks in the country sees  
*Lots* o' fun!—Take spellin'-school;  
Er ole hoe-down jamborees;  
Er revivals; er ef you'll  
Tackle taffy-pullin's you  
Kin git fun, and quite a few!—  
Same with huskin's. But all these

AT "THE LITERARY"

Kind o' frolics they hain't new  
By a hunderd year' er two  
Cipher on it as you please!  
But I'll tell you what I jest  
Think walks over all the rest—  
Anyway it suits *me* best,—  
That's "The Literary."

First they started it—" 'y gee!"  
Thinks-says-I, "this settle-ment  
'S gittin' too high-toned fer me!"  
But when all begin to jine,  
And I heerd *Izory* went,  
I jest kind o' drapped in line,  
Like you've seen some sandy, thin,  
Scrawny shoat putt fer the crick  
Down some pig-trail through the thick  
Spice-bresh, where the whole drove's been  
'Bout six weeks 'fore he gits in!—  
"Can't tell nothin'," I-says-ee,  
"'Bout it tel you go and see  
Their blame 'Literary'!"

## AT "THE LITERARY"

Very first night I was there  
I was 'p'inted to be what  
They call "Critic"—so's a fair  
And square jedgment could be got  
On the pieces 'at was read,  
And on the debate,—“Which air  
Most destructive element,  
Fire er worter?” Then they hed  
Compositions on “Content,”  
“Death,” and “Botany”; and Tomps  
He read one on “Dreenin' Swamps”  
I p'nounced the boss, and said,  
“So fur, 'at's the best thing read  
In yer 'Literary'!”

Then they *sung* some—tel I called  
Order, and got back ag'in  
In the critic's cheer, and hauled  
All o' the p'formers in:—  
Mandy Brizendine read one  
I fergit; and Doc's was “Thought”;  
And Sarepty's, hern was “None  
Air Denied 'at Knocks”; and Daut—

STEPHEN COLT OF  
COLUMBIA, MO.







AT "THE LITERARY"

Fayette Strawnse's little niece—  
She got up and spoke a piece:  
Then Izory she read hern—  
"Best thing in the whole concern,"  
I-says-ee; "now le' 's adjourn  
This-here 'Literary'!"

They was some contendin'—yit  
We broke up in harmony.  
Road outside as white as grit,  
And as slick as slick could be!—  
I'd fetched 'Zory in my sleigh,—  
And I had a heap to say,  
Drivin' back—in fact, I driv  
'Way around the old north way,  
Where the Daubenspeckses live.  
'Zory allus—'fore that night—  
Never 'peared to feel jest right  
In my company.—You see,  
On'y thing on earth saved me  
Was that "Literary"!

## WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING

THERE wasn't two purtier farms in the state  
Than the couple of which I'm about to relate;—  
Jinin' each other—belongin' to Brown,  
And jest at the edge of a flourishin' town.  
Brown was a man, as I understand,  
That allus had handled a good 'eal o' land,  
And was sharp as a tack in drivin' a trade—  
For that's the way most of his money was made.  
And all the grounds and the orchards about  
His two pet farms was all tricked out  
With poppies and posies  
And sweet-smellin' rosies;  
And hundreds o' kinds  
Of all sorts o' vines,  
To tickle the most horticultural minds;  
And little dwarf trees not as thick as your wrist  
With ripe apples on 'em as big as your fist:  
And peaches,—Siberian crabs and pears,  
And quinces—Well! *any* fruit *any* tree bears;  
And the purtiest stream—jest a-swimmin' with fish,  
And—*jest a'most everything heart could wish!*

WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING.

The purtiest orch'rds—I wish you could see  
How purty they was, for I know it 'ud be  
A regular treat!—but I'll go ahead with  
My story! A man by the name o' Smith—  
(A bad name to rhyme,  
But I reckon that I'm  
Not goin' back on a Smith! nary time!)  
'At hadn't soul of kin nor kith,  
And more money than he knowed what to do with,—  
So he comes a-ridin' along one day,  
And *he* says to Brown, in his offhand way—  
Who was trainin' some newfangled vines round a bay-  
Winder—“Howdy-do—look-a-here—say:  
What'll you take for this property here?—  
I'm talkin' o' leavin' the city this year,  
And I want to be  
Where the air is free,  
And I'll *buy* this place, if it ain't too dear!”—  
Well—they grumbled and jawed aroun'—  
“I don't like to part with the place,” says Brown;  
“Well,” says Smith, a-jerkin' his head,  
“That house yonder—bricks painted red—  
Jest like this'n—a *purtier view*—  
Who is it owns *it*?” “That's mine too,”

## WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING

Says Brown, as he winked at a hole in his shoe,  
“But I’ll tell you right here jest what I *kin* do:—  
If you’ll pay the figgers I’ll sell *it* to you.”  
Smith went over and looked at the place—  
Badgered with Brown, and argied the case—  
Thought that Brown’s figgers was rather too tall,  
But, findin’ that Brown wasn’t goin’ to fall,  
In final agreed,  
So they drawed up the deed  
For the farm and the fixtures—the live stock an’ all.  
And so Smith moved from the city as soon  
As he possibly could—But “the man in the moon”  
Knowed more’n Smith o’ farmin’ pursuits,  
And jest to convince you, and have no disputes,  
How little he knowed,  
I’ll tell you his “mode,”  
As he called it, o’ raisin’ “the best that growed,”  
In the way o’ potatoes—  
Cucumbers—tomatoes,  
And squashes as lengthy as young alligators.  
’Twas allus a curious thing to me  
How big a fool a feller kin be  
When he gits on a farm after leavin’ a town!—  
Expectin’ to raise himself up to renown,

STEEPLECHASE TRACKS  
COLUMBIA, Md.





## WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING

And reap for himself agricultural fame,  
By growin' of squashes—*without any shame*—  
As useless and long as a technical name.  
To make the soil pure  
And certainly sure,  
He plastered the ground with patent manure.  
He had cultivators, and double-hoss plows,  
And patent machines for milkin' his cows;  
And patent hay-forks—patent measures and weights,  
And new patent back-action hinges for gates,  
And barn locks and latches, and such little dribs,  
And patents to keep the rats out o' the cribs—  
Reapers and mowers,  
And patent grain sowers;  
And drillers  
And tillers  
And cucumber hillers,  
And harriers;—and had patent rollers and scrapers,  
And took about ten agricultural papers.  
So you can imagine how matters turned out:  
But *Brown* didn't have not a shadder o' doubt  
That Smith didn't know what he was about  
When he said that "the *old* way to farm was played  
out."

## WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING

But Smith worked ahead,  
And when any one said  
That the *old* way o' workin' was better instead  
O' his "modern idees," he allus turned red,  
And wanted to know  
What made people so  
*Infernally* anxious to hear theirselves crow?  
And guessed that he'd manage to hoe his own row.  
Brown he come onc't and leant over the fence,  
And told Smith that he couldn't see any sense  
In goin' to such a tremendous expense  
For the sake o' such no-account experiments:—  
"That'll never make corn!  
As shore's you're born  
It'll come out the leetlest end of the horn!"  
Says Brown, as he pulled off a big roastin'-ear  
From a stalk of his own  
That had tribble outgrown  
Smith's poor yaller shoots, and says he, "Looky here!  
*This* corn was raised in the old-fashioned way,  
And I rather imagine that *this* corn'll pay  
Expenses fer *raisin'* it!—What do you say?"  
Brown got him then to look over his crop.—  
*His* luck that season had been tip-top!



## WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING

And you may surmise  
Smith opened his eyes  
And let out a look o' the wildest surprise  
When Brown showed him punkins as big as the lies  
He was stuffin' him with—about offers he'd had  
For his farm: "I don't want to sell very bad,"  
He says, but says he,  
"Mr. Smith, you kin see  
For yourself how matters is standin' with me,  
*I understand farmin'* and I'd better stay,  
You know, on my farm;—I'm a-makin' it pay—  
I oughtn't to grumble!—I reckon I'll clear  
Away over four thousand dollars this year."  
And that was the reason, he made it appear,  
Why he didn't care about sellin' his farm,  
And hinted at his havin' done himself harm  
In sellin' the other, and wanted to know  
If Smith wouldn't sell back ag'in to him.—So  
Smith took the bait, and says he, "Mr. Brown,  
I wouldn't *sell* out but we might swap aroun'—  
How'll you trade your place for mine?"  
"Purty sharp way o' comin' the shine  
Over Smith! Wasn't it?) Well, sir, this Brown  
Played out his hand and brought Smithy down—

## WHAT SMITH KNEW ABOUT FARMING

Traded with him an', workin' it cute,  
Raked in two thousand dollars to boot  
As slick as a whistle, an' that wasn't all,—  
He managed to trade back again the next fall,—  
And the next—and the next—as long as Smith  
          stayed

He reaped with his harvests an annual trade.—  
Why, I reckon that Brown must 'a' easily made—  
On an *average*—nearly two thousand a year—  
Together he made over seven thousand—clear.—  
Till Mr. Smith found he was losin' his health  
In as big a proportion, almost, as his wealth;  
So at last he concluded to move back to town,  
And sold back his farm to this same Mr. Brown  
At very low figgers, by gittin' it down.  
Further'n this I have nothin' to say  
Than merely advisin' the Smiths fer to stay  
In their grocery stores in flourishin' towns  
And leave agriculture alone—and the Browns.





## KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE

I

**T**ELL you what I like the best—  
'Long about knee-deep in June,  
'Bout the time strawberries melts  
On the vine,—some afternoon  
Like to jes' git out and rest,  
And not work at nothin' else!

## KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE

### II

Orchard's where I'd ruther be—  
Needn't fence it in fer me!—

Jes' the whole sky overhead,  
And the whole airth underneath.  
Sorto' so's a man kin breathe  
Like he ort, and kindo' has  
Elbow-room to keerlessly

Sprawl out len'thways on the grass  
Where the shadders thick and soft  
As the kivvers on the bed  
Mother fixes in the loft  
Allus, when they's company!

### III

Jes' a-sorto' lazin' there—

S'lazy, 'at you peek and peer  
Through the wavin' leaves above,  
Like a feller 'at's in love  
And don't know it, ner don't keer!  
Ever'thing you hear and see  
Got some sort o' interest—  
Maybe find a bluebird's nest

JOHN C. ALLEN  
COLUMBIA, MO.





## KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE

Tucked up there conveniently  
Fer the boy 'at's ap' to be  
Up some other apple-tree!  
Watch the swallers skootin' past  
'Bout as peert as you could ast;  
Er the Bob-white raise and whiz  
Where some other's whistle is.

## IV

Ketch a shadder down below,  
And look up to find the crow—  
Er a hawk,—away up there,  
'Pearantly *froze* in the air!—  
Hear the old hen squawk, and squat  
Over ever' chick she's got,  
Suddent-like!—and she knows where  
That-air hawk is, well as you! —  
You jes' bet your life she do!—  
Eyes a-glitterin' like glass,  
Waitin' till he makes a pass!

## V

Pee-wees' singin', to express  
My opinion, 's second class,

## KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE

Yit you'll hear 'em more er less;  
Sapsucks gittin' down to biz,  
Weedin' out the lonesomeness;  
Mr. Bluejay, full o' sass,  
In them base-ball clothes o' his,  
Sportin' round the orchard jes'  
Like he owned the premises!  
Sun out in the fields kin sizz,  
But flat on yer back, I guess,  
In the shade's where glory is!  
That's jes' what I'd like to do  
Stiddy fer a year er two!

## VI

Plague! ef they ain't somepin' in  
Work 'at kindo' goes ag'in'  
My convictions!—'long about  
Here in June especially!—  
Under some old apple-tree,  
Jes' a-restin' through and through,  
I could git along without  
Nothin' else at all to do  
Only jes' a-wishin' you



## KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE

Wuz a-gittin' there like me,  
And June was eternity!

### VII

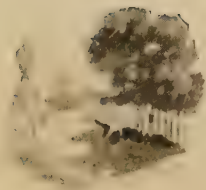
Lay' out there and try to see  
Jes' how lazy you kin be!—  
    Tumble round and souse yer head  
In the clover-bloom, er pull  
    Yer straw hat acrost yer eyes  
    And peek through it at the skies,  
    Thinkin' of old chums 'at's dead,  
    Maybe, smilin' back at you  
In betwixt the beautiful  
    Clouds o' gold and white and blue.—  
Month a man kin railly love—  
June, you know, I'm talkin' of!

### VIII

March ain't never nothin' new!—  
Aprile's altogether too  
    Brash fer me! and May—I jes'  
    'Bominate its promises,—  
Little hints o' sunshine and  
Green around the timber-land—

## KNEE-DEEP IN JUNE

A few blossoms, and a few  
Chip-birds, and a sprout er two,—  
Drap asleep, and it turns in  
'Fore daylight and *snows* ag'in!—  
But when *June* comes—Clear my th'oat  
With wild honey!—Rench my haír  
In the dew! and hold my coat!  
Whoop out loud! and th'ow my hat!—  
June wants me, and I'm to spare!  
Spread them shadders anywhere,  
I'll git down and waller there,  
And obleeged to you at that!





## OLD WINTERS ON THE FARM

I HAVE jest about decided  
It 'ud keep a *town-boy* hoppin'  
Fer to work all winter, choppin'  
Fer a' old fireplace, like *I* did!  
Lawz! them old times wuz contrairy!—  
Blame' backbone o' winter, 'peared-like  
*Wouldn't* break!—and I wuz skeered-like  
Clean on into *Feb'uary*!  
Nothin' ever made me madder  
Than fer Pap to stomp in, layin'  
In a' extra forestick, sayin',  
“Groun'-hog's out and seed his shadder!”



## OLD OCTOBER

OLD October's purt' nigh gone,  
And the frosts is comin' on  
Little *heavier* every day—  
Like our hearts is thataway!  
Leaves is changin' overhead  
Back from green to gray and red,  
Brown and yellor, with their stems  
Loosenin' on the oaks and e'ms;  
And the balance of the trees  
Gittin' balder every breeze—  
Like the heads we're scratchin' on!  
Old October's purt' nigh gone.

STREET SCENES  
COLUMBIA, MO.

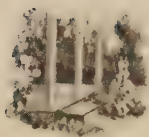




## OLD OCTOBER

I love Old October so,  
I can't bear to see her go—  
Seems to me like losin' some  
Old-home relative er chum—  
'Pears like sorto' settin' by  
Some old friend 'at sigh by sigh  
Was a-passin' out o' sight  
Into everlastin' night!  
Hickernuts a feller hears  
Rattlin' down is more like tears  
Drappin' on the leaves below—  
I love Old October so!

Can't tell what it is 'bout  
Old October knocks me out!—  
I sleep well enough at night—  
And the blamedest appetite  
Ever mortal man possessed,—  
Last thing et, it tastes the best!—  
Warnuts, butternuts, pawpaws,  
'Tles and limbers up my jaws  
Fer raal service, sich as new  
Pork, spareribs, and sausage, too.—  
Yit, fer all, they's somepin' 'bout  
Old October knocks me out!



## OLD-FASHIONED ROSES

THEY ain't no style about 'em,  
And they're sorto' pale and faded,  
Yit the doorway here, without 'em,  
Would be lonesomer, and shaded  
With a good 'eal blacker shadder  
Than the morning-glories makes,  
And the sunshine would look sadder  
Fer their good old-fashion' sakes.

I like 'em 'cause they kindo'-  
Sorto' *make* a feller like 'em!  
And I tell you, when I find a  
Bunch out whur the sun kin strike 'em,



STEWART DILLI  
1870-1900





## OLD-FASHIONED ROSES

It allus sets me thinkin'  
O' the ones 'at used to grow  
And peek in thro' the chinkin'  
O' the cabin, don't you know!

And then I think o' mother,  
And how she ust to love 'em—  
When they wuzn't any other,  
'Less she found 'em up above 'em!  
And her eyes, afore she shut 'em,  
Whispered with a smile and said  
We must pick a bunch and putt 'em  
In her hand when she wuz dead.

But, as I wuz a-sayin',  
They ain't no style about 'em  
Very gaudy er displayin',  
But I wouldn't be without 'em,—  
'Cause I'm happier in these posies,  
And the hollyhawks and sich,  
Than the hummin'-bird 'at noses  
In the roses of the rich.



## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

**N**OBODY on the old farm here but Mother, me  
and John,

Except, of course, the extry he'p when harvest-time  
comes on,—

And *then*, I want to say to you, we *needed* he'p  
about,

As you'd admit, ef you'd a-seen the way the crops  
turned out!

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

A better quarter-section ner a richer soil warn't  
found

Than this-here old home place o' ourn fer fifty miles  
around!—

The house was small—but plenty-big we found it  
from the day

That John—our only livin' son—packed up and went  
away.

You see, we tuk sich pride in John—his mother  
more'n me—

That's natchurul; but *both* of us was proud as proud  
could be;

Fer the boy, from a little chap, was most oncommon  
bright,

And seemed in work as well as play to take the same  
delight.

He allus went a-whistlin' round the place, as glad at  
heart

As robins up at five o'clock to git an airly start;  
And many a time 'fore daylight Mother's waked me  
up to say—

“Jest listen, David!—listen!—Johnny's beat the  
birds to-day!”

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

High-sperited from boyhood, with a most inquirin'  
turn,—

He wanted to learn ever'thing on earth they was to  
learn;

He'd ast more plaguy questions in a mortal-minute  
here

Than his grandpap in Paradise could answer in a  
year!

And *read!* w'y, his own mother learnt him how to  
read and spell;

And "The Childern of the Abbey"—w'y, he knowed  
that book as well

At fifteen as his parents!—and "The Pilgrim's Prog-  
ress," too—

Jest knuckled down, the shaver did, and read 'em  
through and through!

At eighteen, Mother 'lowed the boy must have a  
better chance—

That we ort to educate him, under any circumstance;  
And John he j'ined his mother, and they ding-donged  
and kep' on,

Tel I sent him off to school in town, half glad that  
he was gone.

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

But—I missed him—w’y, of course I did!—The Fall  
and Winter through

I never built the kitchen-fire, er split a stick in two,  
Er fed the stock, er butchered, er swung up a gam-  
brel-pin,

But what I thought o’ John, and wished that he was  
home ag’in.

He’d come, sometimes—on Sund’y’s most—and stay  
the Sund’y out;

And on Thanksgivin’-Day he ’peared to like to be  
about:

But a change was workin’ on him—he was stiller  
than before,

And didn’t joke, ner laugh, ner sing and whistle any  
more.

And his talk was all so proper; and I noticed, with  
a sigh,

He was tryin’ to raise side-whiskers, and had on a  
stripèd tie,

And a standin’-collar, ironed up as stiff and slick as  
bone;

And a breast-pin, and a watch and chain and plug-  
hat of his own.

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

But when Spring-weather opened out, and John was  
to come home

And he'p me through the season, I was glad to see  
him come;

But my happiness, that evening, with the settin' sun  
went down,

When he bragged of "a position" that was offered  
him in town.

"But," says I, "you'll not accept it?" "W'y, of course  
I will," says he.—

"This drudgin' on a farm," he says, "is not the life  
fer me;

I've set my stakes up higher," he continued, light  
and gay,

"And town's the place fer *me*, and I'm a-goin' right  
away!"

And go he did!—his mother clingin' to him at the  
gate,

A-pleadin' and a-cryin'; but it hadn't any weight.

I was tranquiller, and told her 'twarn't no use to  
worry so,

And onclasped her arms from round his neck round  
mine—and let him go!



STUDIO 1110  
220 10th Ave.





## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

I felt a little bitter feelin' fooling round about  
The aidges of my conscience; but I didn't let it  
out;—

I simply retch out, trimbly-like, and tuk the boy's  
hand,

And though I didn't say a word, I knowed he'd under-  
stand.

And—well!—sence then the old home here was  
mighty lonesome, shore!

With me a-workin' in the field and Mother at the  
door,

Her face ferever to'rds the town, and fadin' more  
and more—

Her only son nine miles away, a-clerkin' in a store!

The weeks and months dragged by us; and some-  
times the boy would write

A letter to his mother, sayin' that his work was  
light,

And not to feel oneasy about his health a bit—

Though his business was confinin' he was gittin'  
used to it.

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

And sometimes he would write and ast how *I* was  
gittin' on,  
And ef I had to pay out much fer he'p sence he was  
gone;  
And how the hogs was doin', and the balance of the  
stock,  
And talk on fer a page er two jest like he used to  
talk.

And he wrote, along 'fore harvest, that he guessed  
he would git home,  
Fer business would, of course, be dull in town.—  
But *didn't* come:—  
We got a postal later, sayin' when they had no trade  
They filled the time "invoicin' goods," and that was  
why he stayed.

And then he quit a-writin' altogether: Not a word—  
Exceptin' what the neighbors brung who'd been to  
town and heard  
What store John was clerkin' in, and went round to  
inquire  
If they could buy their goods there less and sell  
their produce higher.

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

And so the Summer faded out, and Autumn wore  
away,

And a keener Winter never fetched around Thanks-  
givin'-Day!

The night before that day of thanks I'll never quite  
fergit,

The wind a-howlin' round the house—it makes me  
creepy yit!

And there set me and Mother—me a-twistin' at the  
prongs

Of a green scrub-ellum forestick with a vicious pair  
of tongs,

And Mother sayin', "*David! David!*" in a' undertone,  
As though she thought that I was thinkin' bad-words  
unbeknown.

"I've dressed the turkey, David, fer to-morrow,"  
Mother said,

A-tryin' to wedge some pleasant subject in my stub-  
born head,—

"And the mince-meat I'm a-mixin' is perfection  
mighty nigh;

And the pound-cake is delicious-rich—" "Who'll eat  
'em?" I-says-I.

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

“The cramberries is drippin’-sweet,” says Mother,  
    runnin’ on,

P’tendin’ not to hear me;—“and somehow I thought  
    of John

All the time they was a-jellin’—fer you know they  
    allus was

His favorite—he likes ’em so!” Says I, “Well, s’pose  
    he does?”

“Oh, nothin’ much!” says Mother, with a quiet sort  
    o’ smile—

“This gentleman behind my cheer may tell you after  
    while!”

And as I turnt and looked around, some one riz up  
    and leant

And putt his arms round Mother’s neck, and laughed  
    in low content.

“It’s *me*,” he says—“your fool-boy John, come back  
    to shake your hand;

Set down with you, and talk with you, and make you  
    understand

## HOW JOHN QUIT THE FARM

How dearer yit than all the world is this old home  
that we  
Will spend Thanksgivin' in fer life—jest, Mother,  
you and me!"

. . . . .

Nobody on the old farm here but Mother, me and  
John,  
Except, of course, the extry he'p when harvest-time  
comes on;  
And then, I want to say to you, we *need* sich he'p  
about,  
As you'd admit, ef you could see the way the crops  
turn out!





## WORTERMELON TIME

**O**LD wortermelon time is a-comin' round again,  
And they ain't no man a-livin' any tickleder'n  
me,

Fer the way I hanker after wortermelons is a sin—  
Which is the why and wharefore, as you can  
plainly see.

Oh! it's in the sandy soil wortermelons does the best,  
And it's thare they'll lay and waller in the sun-  
shine and the dew

Tel they wear all the green streaks off of theyr  
breast;

And you bet I ain't a-findin' any fault with them;  
air you?



## WORTERMELON TIME

They ain't no better thing in the vegetable line;  
And they don't need much 'tendin', as ev'ry farmer  
knows;  
And when they ripe and ready fer to pluck from  
the vine,  
I want to say to you theyr the best fruit that  
grows.

It's some likes the yeller-core, and some likes the red,  
And it's some says "The Little Californy" is the  
best;  
But the sweetest slice of all I ever wedged in my  
head,  
Is the old "Edingburg Mounting-sprout," of the  
west.

You don't want no punkins nigh your wortermelon  
vines—  
'Cause some-way-another, they'll spile your mel-  
ons, shore;—  
I've seed 'em taste like punkins, from the core to  
the rines,  
Which may be a fact you have heerd of before.

## WORTERMELON TIME

But your melons that's raised right and 'tended to  
with care,

You can walk around amongst 'em with a parent's  
pride and joy,

And thump 'em on the heads with as fatherly a' air  
As ef each of them was your little girl er boy.

I joy in my hart jest to hear that rippin' sound  
When you split one down the back and jolt the  
halves in two,

And the friends you love the best is gethered all  
around—

And you says unto your sweethart, "Oh, here's  
the core fer you!"

And I like to slice 'em up in big pieces fer 'em all,  
Espeshally the childern, and watch theyr high  
delight

As one by one the rines with theyr pink notches falls,  
And they holler fer some more, with unquenched  
appetite.

Boys takes to it natchurl, and I like to see 'em eat—  
A slice of wortermelon's like a frenchharp in theyr  
hands,





## WORTERMELON TIME

And when they "saw" it through theyr mouth sich  
music can't be beat—

'Cause it's music both the sperit and the stummick  
understands.

Oh, they's more in wortermelons than the purty-  
colored meat,

And the overflowin' sweetness of the worter  
squshed betwixt

The up'ard and the down'ard motions of a feller's  
teeth,

And it's the taste of ripe old age and juicy child-  
hood mixed.

Fer I never taste a melon but my thoughts flies away  
To the summertime of youth; and again I see the  
dawn

And the fadin' afternoon of the long summer day,  
And the dusk and dew a-fallin', and the night a-  
comin' on.

And thare's the corn around us, and the lispin' leaves  
and trees,

And the stars a-peekin' down on us as still as  
silver mice,

## WORTERMELON TIME

And us boys in the wortermelons on our hands and  
knees,

And the new-moon hangin' ore us like a yellercored slice.

Oh! it's wortermelon time is a-comin' round again,

And they ain't no man a-livin' any tickleder'n me,  
Fer the way I hanker after wortermelons is a sin—

Which is the why and wherefore, as you can  
plainly see.



## THE TREE-TOAD

'S CUR'OUS-LIKE," said the tree-toad,  
    "I've twittered fer rain all day ;  
And I got up soon,  
And hollered tel noon—  
But the sun, hit blazed away,  
Tel I jest clumb down in a crawfish-hole,  
Weary at hart, and sick at soul !

## THE TREE-TOAD

“Dozed away fer an hour,  
And I tackled the thing ag’in:  
And I sung, and sung,  
Tel I knowed my lung  
Was jest about give in;  
And *then*, thinks I, ef hit don’t rain *now*,  
They’s nothin’ in singin’, anyhow!

“Onc’t in a while some farmer  
Would come a-drivin’ past;  
And he’d hear my cry,  
And stop and sigh—  
Tel I jest laid back, at last,  
And I hollered rain tel I thought my th’oat  
Would bust wide open at ever’ note!

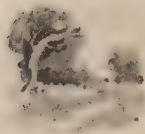
“But I *fetch*ed her!—O *I fetch*ed her!—  
’Cause a little while ago,  
As I kindo’ set,  
With one eye shet,  
And a-singin’ soft and low,  
A voice drapped down on my fevered brain,  
A-sayin’,—‘*Ef you’ll jest hush I’ll rain!*’ ”



STUDIO OF 2011  
JULY 1914







## A COUNTRY PATHWAY

I COME upon it suddenly, alone—  
A little pathway winding in the weeds  
That fringe the roadside; and with dreams my own,  
I wander as it leads.

Full wistfully along the slender way,  
Through summer tan of freckled shade and shine,  
I take the path that leads me as it may—  
Its every choice is mine.

A chipmunk, or a sudden-whirring quail,  
Is startled by my step as on I fare—  
A garter-snake across the dusty trail  
Glances and—is not there.

## A COUNTRY PATHWAY

Above the arching jimson-weeds flare twos  
And twos of sallow-yellow butterflies,  
Like blooms of lorn primrose blowing loose  
When autumn winds arise.

The trail dips—dwindles—broadens then, and lifts  
Itself astride a cross-road dubiously,  
And, from the fennel marge beyond it, drifts  
Still onward, beckoning me.

And though it needs must lure me mile on mile  
Out of the public highway, still I go,  
My thoughts, far in advance in Indian-file,  
Allure me even so.

Why, I am as a long-lost boy that went  
At dusk to bring the cattle to the bars,  
And was not found again, though Heaven lent  
His mother all the stars

With which to seek him through that awful night.  
O years of nights as vain!—Stars never rise  
But well might miss their glitter in the light  
Of tears in mother-eyes!

STEPHENS LAURENCE  
COLUMBIA, MO.





## A COUNTRY PATHWAY

So—on, with quickened breaths, I follow still—

My avant-courier must be obeyed!

Thus am I led, and thus the path, at will,

Invites me to invade

A meadow's precincts, where my daring guide

Clambers the steps of an old-fashioned stile,

And stumbles down again, the other side,

To gambol there a while

In pranks of hide-and-seek, as on ahead

I see it running, while the clover-stalks

Shake rosy fists at me, as though they said—

“You dog our country-walks

“And mutilate us with your walking-stick!—

We will not suffer tamely what you do,

And warn you at your peril,—for we'll sic

Our bumblesbees on you!”

But I smile back, in airy nonchalance,—

The more determined on my wayward quest,

As some bright memory a moment dawns

A morning in my breast—

## A COUNTRY PATHWAY

Sending a thrill that hurries me along  
In faulty similes of childish skips,  
Enthused with lithe contortions of a song  
Performing on my lips.

In wild meanderings o'er pasture wealth—  
Erratic wanderings through dead'ning-lands,  
Where sly old brambles, plucking me by stealth,  
Put berries in my hands:

Or the path climbs a boulder—wades a slough—  
Or, rollicking through buttercups and flags,  
Goes gayly dancing o'er a deep bayou  
On old tree-trunks and snags:

Or, at the creek, leads o'er a limpid pool  
Upon a bridge the stream itself has made,  
With some Spring-freshet for the mighty tool  
That its foundation laid.

I pause a moment here to bend and muse,  
With dreamy eyes, on my reflection, where  
A boat-backed bug drifts on a helpless cruise,  
Or wildly oars the air,



## A COUNTRY PATHWAY

As, dimly seen, the pirate of the brook—

The pike, whose jaunty hulk denotes his speed—  
Swings pivoting about, with wary look  
Of low and cunning greed.

Till, filled with other thought, I turn again  
To where the pathway enters in a realm  
Of lordly woodland, under sovereign reign  
Of towering oak and elm.

A puritanic quiet here reviles

The almost whispered warble from the hedge,  
And takes a locust's rasping voice and files  
The silence to an edge.

In such a solitude my sombre way

Strays like a misanthrope within a gloom  
Of his own shadows—till the perfect day  
Bursts into sudden bloom,

And crowns a long, declining stretch of space,  
Where King Corn's armies lie with flags unfurled,  
And where the valley's dint in Nature's face  
Dimples a smiling world.

## A COUNTRY PATHWAY

And lo! through mists that may not be dispelled,  
I see an old farm homestead, as in dreams,  
Where, like a gem in costly setting held,  
The old log cabin gleams.

. . . . .

O darling Pathway! lead me bravely on  
Adown your valley-way, and run before  
Among the roses crowding up the lawn  
And thronging at the door,—

And carry up the echo there that shall  
Arouse the drowsy dog, that he may bay  
The household out to greet the prodigal  
That wanders home to-day.





## WHEN EARLY MARCH SEEMS MIDDLE MAY

**W**HEN country roads begin to thaw  
In mottled spots of damp and dust,  
And fences by the margin draw  
Along the frosty crust  
Their graphic silhouettes, I say,  
The Spring is coming round this way.

WHEN EARLY MARCH SEEMS MIDDLE MAY

When morning-time is bright with sun  
And keen with wind, and both confuse  
The dancing, glancing eyes of one  
With tears that ooze and ooze—  
And nose-tips weep as well as they,  
The Spring is coming round this way.

When suddenly some shadow-bird  
Goes wavering beneath the gaze,  
And through the hedge the moan is heard  
Of kine that fain would graze  
In grasses new, I smile and say,  
The Spring is coming round this way.

When knotted horse-tails are untied,  
And teamsters whistle here and there.  
And clumsy mitts are laid aside  
And choppers' hands are bare,  
And chips are thick where children play,  
The Spring is coming round this way.

When through the twigs the farmer tramps,  
And troughs are chunked beneath the trees,  
And fragrant hints of sugar-camps  
Astray in every breeze,—

## WHEN EARLY MARCH SEEMS MIDDLE MAY

When early March seems middle May,  
The Spring is coming round this way.

When coughs are changed to laughs, and when  
Our frowns melt into smiles of glee,  
And all our blood thaws out again  
In streams of ecstasy,  
And poets wreak their roundelay,  
The Spring is coming round this way.



## A TALE OF THE AIRLY DAYS

**O**H! tell me a tale of the airy days—  
Of the times as they ust to be;  
“Piller of Fi-er” and “Shakespeare’s Plays”  
Is a’ most too deep fer me!  
I want plane facts, and I want plane words,  
Of the good old-fashioned ways,  
When speech run free as the songs of birds  
’Way back in the airy days.

STEPHENS COLLECTION  
No. 100, 101, 102







## A TALE OF THE AIRLY DAYS

Tell me a tale of the timber-lands—  
Of the old-time pioneers;  
Somepin' a pore man understands  
With his feelin's 's well as ears.  
Tell of the old log house,—about  
The loft, and the puncheon flore—  
The old fi-er place, with the crane swung out,  
And the latch-string through the door.

Tell of the things jest as they was—  
They don't need no excuse!—  
Don't tech 'em up like the poets does,  
Tel theyr all too fine fer use!—  
Say they was 'leven in the fambily—  
Two beds, and the chist, below,  
And the trundle-beds that each helt three,  
And the clock and the old bureau.

Then blow the horn at the old back-door  
Tel the echoes all halloo,  
And the childern gethers home onc't more,  
Jest as they ust to do:

## A TALE OF THE AIRLY DAYS

Blow fer Pap tel he hears and comes,  
With Tomps and Elias, too,  
A-marchin' home, with the fife and drums  
And the old Red White and Blue!

Blow and blow tel the sound draps low  
As the moan of the whipperwill,  
And wake up Mother, and Ruth and Jo,  
All sleepin' at Bethel Hill:  
Blow and call tel the faces all  
Shine out in the back-log's blaze,  
And the shadders dance on the old hewed wall  
As they did in the airly days.





## A VOICE FROM THE FARM

**I**T IS my dream to have you here with me,  
Out of the heated city's dust and din—  
Here where the colts have room to gambol in,  
And kine to graze, in clover to the knee.  
I want to see your wan face happily  
Lit with the wholesome smiles that have not been  
In use since the old games you used to win  
When we pitched horseshoes: And I want to be  
At utter loaf with you in this dim land  
Of grove and meadow, while the crickets make  
Our own talk tedious, and the bat wields  
His bulky flight, as we cease converse and  
In a dusk like velvet smoothly take  
Our way toward home across the dewy fields.



## ROMANCIN'

I B'EN a-kind o' "*musin'*," as the feller says,  
and I'm

About o' the conclusion that they hain't no  
better time,

When you come to cipher on it, than the times we  
ust to know

When we swore our first "*dog-gone-it*" sort o' solum-  
like and low!

You git my idy, do you?—*Little* tads, you under-  
stand—

Jest a-wishin' thue and thue you that you on'y wuz a  
*man*.—

Yit here I am, this minit, even sixty, to a day,  
And fergittin' all that's in it, wishin' jest the other  
way!

ROMANCIN'

I hain't no hand to lectur' on the times, er *dimon-*  
strate

Whare the trouble is, er hector and domineer with  
Fate,—

But when I git so flurried, and so pestered-like and  
blue,

And so rail owdacious worried, let me tell you what  
I do!—

I jest gee-haw the hosses, and onhook the swingle-  
tree,

Whare the hazel-bushes tosses down theyr shadders  
over me;

And I draw my plug o' navy, and I climb the fence,  
and set

Jest a-thinkin' here, i gravy! tel my eyes is wringin'-  
wet!

Tho' I still kin see the trouble o' the *presunt*, ī kin  
see—

Kindo' like my sight wuz double—all the things that  
*ust* to be;

And the flutter o' the robin and the teeter o' the wren  
Sets the willer-branches bobbin' "howdy-do" thum  
*Now to Then!*

## ROMANCIN'

The deadnin' and the thicket's jest a-b'ilin' full of  
June,  
From the rattle o' the cricket, to the yallar-hammer's  
tune;  
And the catbird in the bottom, and the sapsuck on  
the snag,  
Seems ef they can't—od-rot 'em!—jest do nothin'  
else but brag!

They's music in the twitter of the bluebird and the  
jay,  
And that sassy little critter jest a-peckin' all the  
day;  
They's music in the "flicker," and they's music in  
the thrush,  
And they's music in the snicker o' the chipmunk in  
the brush!

They's music *all around me*!—And I go back, in a  
dream  
Sweeter yit than ever found me fast asleep,—and in  
the stream  
That ust to split the medder whare the dandylions  
growed,  
I stand knee-deep, and redder than the sunset down  
the road.

STEPHEN COLLEGE  
COLUMBIA, MO.







## ROMANCIN'

Then's when I' b'en a-fishin'!—And they's other  
fellers, too,  
With theyr hick'ry-poles a-swishin' out behind 'em;  
and a few  
Little "shiners" on our stringers, with theyr tails tip-  
toein' bloom,  
As we dance 'em in our fingers all the happy journey  
home.

I kin see us, true to Natur', thum the time we started  
out,  
With a biscuit and a 'tater in our little "round-  
about"!—  
I kin see our lines a-tanglin', and our elbows in a jam,  
And our naked legs a-danglin' thum the apern o'  
the dam.

I kin see the honeysuckle climbin' up around the mill,  
And kin hear the worter chuckle, and the wheel a-  
growlin' still;  
And thum the bank below it I kin steal the old-canoe,  
And jest git in and row it like the miller ust to do.

## ROMANCIN'

W'y, I git my fancy focussed on the past so mortul  
plane  
I kin even smell the locus'-blossoms bloomin' in the  
lane;  
And I hear the cow-bells clinkin' sweeter tunes 'n  
"Money-musk"  
Fer the lightnin' bugs a-blinkin' and a-dancin' in the  
dusk.

And when I've kep' on "musin'," as the feller says,  
tel I'm  
Firm-fixed in the conclusion that they hain't no  
better time,  
When you come to cipher on it, than the *old* times,—  
I de-clare  
I kin wake and say "dog-gone-it!" jest as soft as any  
prayer!





## UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE

UP and down old Brandywine,  
In the days 'at's past and gone—  
With a dad-burn hook-and-line  
And a saplin' pole—i swawn!  
I've had more fun, to the square  
Inch, than ever *anywhere*!  
Heaven to come can't discount *mine*  
Up and down old Brandywine!

UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE

Hain't no sense in *wishin'*—yit  
Wisht to goodness I *could* jes  
“Gee” the blame’ world round and git  
Back to that old happiness!—  
Kindo’ drive back in the shade  
“The old Covered Bridge” there laid  
’Crosst the crick, and sorto’ soak  
My soul over, hub and spoke!

Honest, now!—it hain’t no *dream*  
’At I’m wantin’,—but *the fac’s*  
As they wuz; the same old stream,  
And the same old times, i jacks!—  
Gim me back my bare feet—and  
Stonebruise too!—And scratched and tanned!  
And let hottest dog-days shine  
Up and down old Brandywine!

In and on betwixt the trees  
’Long the banks, pour down yer noon,  
Kindo’ curdled with the breeze  
And the yallerhammer’s tune;

STEPHENS COMPANY  
COLUMBIA, MO.





UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE

And the smokin', chokin' dust  
O' the turnpike at its wusst—  
*Saturd'ys*, say, when it seems  
Road's jes jammed with country teams!—

Whilse the old town, fur away  
'Crosst the hazy pastur'-land,  
Dozed-like in the heat o' day  
Peaceful' as a hired hand.  
Jolt the gravel th'ough the floor  
O' the old bridge!—grind and roar  
With yer blame percession-line—  
Up and down old Brandywine!

Souse me and my new straw-hat  
Off the foot-log!—what *I* care?—  
Fist shoved in the crown o' that—  
Like the old Clown ust to wear.  
Wouldn't swop it fer a' old  
Gin-u-wine raal crown o' gold!—  
Keep yer *King* ef you'll gim me  
Jes the boy I ust to be!

UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE

Spill my fishin'-worms! er steal  
My best "goggle-eye!"—but you  
Can't lay hands on joys I feel  
Nibblin' like they ust to do!  
So, in memory, to-day  
Same old ripple lips away  
At my "cork" and saggin' line,  
Up and down old Brandywine!

There the logs is, round the hill,  
Where "Old Irvin" ust to lift  
Out sunfish from daylight till  
Dewfall—'fore he'd leave "The Drift"  
And give *us* a chance—and then  
Kindo' fish back home again,  
Ketchin' 'em jes left and right  
Where *we* hadn't got a "bite!"

Er, 'way windin' out and in,—  
Old path th'ough the iurnweeds  
And dog-fennel to yer chin—  
Then come suddent, th'ough the reeds



## UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE

And cat-tails, smack into where  
Them-air woods-hogs ust to scare  
Us clean 'crosst the County-line,  
Up and down old Brandywine!

But the dim roar o' the dam  
It 'ud coax us funder still  
To'rds the old race, slow and ca'm,  
Slidin' on to Huston's mill—  
Where, I 'spect, "The Freeport crowd"  
Never *warmed* to us er 'lowed  
We wuz quite so overly  
Welcome as we aimed to be.

Still it 'peared-like ever'thing—  
Fur away from home as *there*—  
Had more *relish*-like, i jing!—  
Fish in stream, er bird in air!  
O them rich old bottom-lands,  
Past where Cowden's Schoolhouse stands!  
Wortermelons—*master-mine*!  
Up and down old Brandywine!

## UP AND DOWN OLD BRANDYWINE

And sich pop-paws!—Lumps o' raw  
Gold and green,—jes oozy th'ough  
With ripe yaller—like you've saw  
Custard-pie with no crust to:  
And jes *gorges* o' wild plums,  
Till a feller'd suck his thumbs  
Clean up to his elbows! *My!*—  
*Me some more er lem me die!*

Up and down old Brandywine! . . .  
Stripe me with pokeberry-juice!—  
Flick me with a pizenvine  
And yell "*Yip!*" and lem me loose!  
—Old now as I then wuz young,  
'F I could sing as I *have* sung,  
Song 'ud surely ring *dee-vine*  
Up and down old Brandywine!





## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

I HAIN'T no hand at tellin' tales,  
Er spinnin' yarns, as the sailors say;  
Someway o' 'nother, language fails  
To slide fer me in the oily way  
That *lawyers* has; and I wisht it would,  
Fer I've got somepin' that I call good;  
But bein' only a country squire,  
I've learned to listen and admire,  
Ruther preferrin' to be addressed  
Than talk myse'f—but I'll do my best:—

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

Old Jeff Thompson—well, I'll say,  
Was the clos'test man I ever saw!—  
*Rich* as cream, but the porest pay,  
And the meanest man to work fer—La!  
I've knowed that man to work one "hand"—  
Fer little er nothin', you understand—  
From four o'clock in the morning light  
Tel eight and nine o'clock at night,  
And then find fault with his appetite!  
He'd drive all over the neighborhood  
To miss the place where a toll-gate stood,  
And slip in town, by some old road  
That no two men in the county knowed,  
With a jag o' wood, and a sack o' wheat,  
That wouldn't burn and you couldn't eat!  
And the trades he'd make, 'll I jest de-clare,  
Was enough to make a preacher swear!  
And then he'd hitch, and hang about  
Tel the lights in the toll-gate was blowed out,  
And then the turnpike he'd turn in  
And sneak his way back home ag'in!

Some folks hint, and I make no doubt,  
That that's what wore his old wife out—

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

Toilin' away from day to day  
And year to year, through heat and cold,  
Uncomplainin'—the same old way  
The martyrs died in the days of old;  
And a-clingin', too, as the martyrs done,  
To one fixed faith, and her *only* one,—  
Little Patience, the sweetest child  
That ever wept unrickonciled,  
Er felt the pain and the ache and sting  
That only a mother's death can bring.  
Patience Thompson!—I think that name  
Must 'a' come from a power above,  
Fer it seemed to fit her jest the same  
As a *gaiter* would, er a fine kid glove!  
And to see that girl, with all the care  
Of the household on her—I de-clare  
It was *oudacious*, the work she'd do,  
And the thousand plans that she'd putt through;  
And sing like a medder-lark all day long,  
And drownd her cares in the joys o' song;  
And *laugh* sometimes tel the farmer's "hand,"  
Away fur off in the fields, would stand  
A-listenin', with the plow half drawn,  
Tel the coaxin' echoes called him on;

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

And the furries seemed, in his dreamy eyes,  
Like foot-paths a-leadin' to Paradise,  
As off through the hazy atmosphere  
The call fer dinner reached his ear.

Now *love's* as cunnin' a little thing  
As a hummin'-bird upon the wing,  
And as liable to poke his nose  
Jest where folks would least suppose,—  
And more'n likely build his nest  
Right in the heart you'd leave unguessed,  
And live and thrive at your expense—  
At least, that's *my* experience.  
And old Jeff Thompson often thought,  
In his se'fish way, that the quiet John  
Was a stiddy chap, as a farm-hand *ought*  
To always be,—fer the airliest dawn  
Found John busy—and "*easy*," too,  
Whenever his *wages* would fall due!—  
To sum him up with a final touch,  
He *eat* so little and *worked* so much,  
That old Jeff laughed to hisse'f and said  
"He makes *me* money and airns his bread!"

COLUMBIA, MD.







## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

But John, fer all of his quietude,  
Would sometimes drap a word er so  
That none but *Patience* understood,  
And none but her was *meant* to know!—  
Maybe at meal-times John would say,  
As the sugar-bowl come down his way,  
“Thanky, no; *my* coffee’s sweet  
Enough fer *me!*” with sich conceit,  
*She’d* know at once, without no doubt,  
*He* meant because *she* poured it out;  
And smile and blush, and all sich stuff,  
And ast ef it was “*strong* enough?”  
And git the answer, neat and trim,  
“It *couldn’t* be too ‘strong’ fer *him!*”

And so things went fer ’bout a year,  
Tel John, at last, found pluck to go  
And pour his tale in the old man’s ear—  
And ef it had been *hot lead*, I know  
It couldn’t ’a’ raised a louder fuss,  
Ner ’a’ riled the old man’s temper wuss!  
He jest *lit* in, and cussed and swore,  
And lunged and rared, and ripped and tore,

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

And told John jest to leave his door,  
And not to darken it no more!  
But Patience cried, with eyes all wet,  
“Remember, John, and don’t ferget,  
*Whatever* comes, I love you yet!”  
But the old man thought, in his se’fish way,  
“I’ll see her married rich some day;  
And *that*,” thinks he, “is money fer *me*—  
And my will’s *law*, as it ought to be!”  
So when, in the course of a month er so,  
A *widower*, with a farm er two,  
Comes to Jeff’s, w’y, the folks, you know  
Had to *talk*—as the folks’ll do:  
It was the talk of the neighborhood—  
*Patience* and *John*, and *their* affairs;—  
And this old chap with a few gray hairs  
Had “cut John out,” it was understood.  
And some folks reckoned “Patience, too,  
Knowed what *she* was a-goin’ to do—  
It was *like* her—la! indeed!—  
All *she* loved was *dollars* and *cents*—  
*Like old Jeff*—and they saw no need  
Fer *John* to pine at *her* negligence!”  
But others said, in a *kinder* way,  
They missed the songs she used to sing—  
They missed the smiles that used to play

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

Over her face, and the laughin' ring  
Of her glad voice—that *everything*  
Of her *old* se'f seemed dead and gone,  
And this was the ghost that they gazed on!

Tel finally it was noised about  
There was a *weddin'* soon to be  
Down at Jeff's; and the "cat was out"  
Shore enough!—'Ll the *Jee-mun-nee!*  
It *riled* me when John told me so,—  
Fer *I was a friend o' John's*, you know;  
And his trimblin' voice jest broke in two—  
As a feller's voice'll sometimes do.—  
And I says, says I, "Ef I know my biz—  
And I think I know what *jestice* is,—  
I've read *some* law—and I'd advise  
A man like you to wipe his eyes  
And square his jaws and start *ag'in*,  
*Fer jestice is a-goin' to win!*"  
And it wasn't long tel his eyes had cleared  
As blue as the skies, and the *sun* appeared  
In the shape of a good old-fashioned smile  
That I hadn't seen fer a long, long while.

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

So we talked on fer a' hour er more,  
And sunned ourselves in the open door,—  
Tel a hoss-and-buggy down the road  
Come a-drivin' up, that I guess John *knowed*,—  
Fer he winked and says, "I'll dessappear—  
*They'd* smell a mice ef they saw *me* here!"  
And he thumbed his nose at the old gray mare,  
And hid hisse'f in the house somewhere.  
Well.—The rig drove up: and I raised my head  
As old Jeff hollered to me and said  
That "him and his old friend there had come  
To see ef the squire was at home."  
. . . I told 'em "I was; and I *aimed* to be  
At every chance of a weddin'-fee!"  
And then I laughed—and they laughed, too,—  
Fer that was the object they had in view.  
"Would I be on hands at eight that night?"  
They ast; and 's-I, "You're mighty right,  
*I'll* be on hand!" And then I *bu'st*  
Out a-laughin' my very wu'st,—  
And so did they, as they wheeled away  
And drove to'rds town in a cloud o' dust.  
Then I shet the door, and me and John  
Laughed and *laughed*, and jest *laughed* on,

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

Tel Mother drapped her specs, and *by*  
*Jeewhillikers!* I thought she'd *die!*—  
And she couldn't 'a' told, I'll bet my hat,  
What on earth she was laughin' at!

But all o' the fun o' the tale hain't done!—  
Fer a drizzlin' rain had jest begun,  
And a-havin' 'bout four mile' to ride,  
I jest concluded I'd better light  
Out fer Jeff's and save my hide,—  
Fer *it was a-goin' to storm, that night!*  
So we went down to the barn, and John  
Saddled my beast, and I got on;  
And he told me somepin' to not ferget,  
And when I left, he was *laughin'* yet.

And, 'proachin' on to my journey's end,  
The great big draps o' the rain come down,  
And the thunder growled in a way to lend  
An awful look to the lowerin' frown  
The dull sky wore; and the lightnin' glanced  
Tel my old mare jest *more'n* pranced,  
And tossed her head, and bugged her eyes  
To about four times their natchurl size,

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

As the big black lips of the clouds 'ud drap  
Out some oath of a thunderclap,  
And threaten on in an undertone  
That chilled a feller clean to the bone!

But I struck shelter soon enough  
To save myse'f. And the house was jammed  
With the women-folks, and the weddin'-stuff:—  
A great, long table, fairly *crammed*  
With big pound-cakes—and chops and steaks—  
And roasts and stews—and stumick-aches  
Of every fashion, form, and size,  
From twisters up to punkin-pies!  
And candies, oranges, and figs,  
And reezins,—all the “whilligigs”  
And “jim-cracks” that the law allows  
On sich occasions!—Bobs and bows  
Of gigglin' girls, with corkscrew curls,  
And fancy ribbons, reds and blues,  
And “beau-ketchers” and “curliques”  
To beat the world! And seven o'clock  
Brought old Jeff;—and brought—*the groom*,—  
With a sideboard-collar on, and stock  
That choked him so, he hadn't room

STEPHENS COLLECTION  
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## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

To *swaller* in, er even sneeze,  
Er clear his th'oat with any ease  
Er comfort—and a good square cough  
Would saw his Adam's apple off!

But as fer *Patience*—*My! Oomh-oomh!*—  
I never saw her look so sweet!—  
Her face was cream and roses, too;  
And then them eyes o' heavenly blue  
Jest made an angel all complete!  
And when she split 'em up in smiles  
And splintered 'em around the room,  
And danced acrost and met the groom,  
And *laughed out loud*—It kind o' spiles  
My language when I come to that—  
Fer, as she laid away his hat,  
Thinks I, "*The papers hid inside  
Of that said hat must make a bride  
A happy one fer all her life,  
Er else a wrecked and wretched wife!*"  
And, someway, then, I thought of *John*,—  
Then looked towards *Patience* . . . She  
was *gone!*

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

The door stood open, and the rain  
Was dashin' in; and sharp and plain  
Above the storm we heerd a cry—  
A ringin', laughin', loud "Good-by!"  
That died away, as fleet and fast  
A hoss's hoofs went splashin' past!  
And that was all. 'Twas done that quick! . . .  
You heerd o' fellers "lookin' sick"?  
I wisht you'd seen *the groom* jest then—  
I wisht you'd seen them two old men,  
With starin' eyes that fairly *glared*  
At one another, and the scared  
And empty faces of the crowd,—  
I wisht you could 'a' been allowed  
To jest look on and see it all,—  
And heerd the girls and women bawl  
And wring their hands; and heerd old Jeff  
A-cussin' as he swung hisse'f  
Upon his hoss, who champed his bit  
As though old Nick had holt of it:  
And cheek by jowl the two old wrecks  
Rode off as though they'd break their necks.

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

And as we all stood starin' out  
Into the night, I felt the brush  
Of some one's hand, and turned about,  
And I heerd a voice that whispered, "*Hush!—*  
*They're waitin' in the kitchen, and*  
*You're wanted. Don't you understand?"*  
Well, ef my *memory* serves me now,  
I think I winked.—Well, anyhow,  
I left the crowd a-gawkin' there,  
And jest slipped off around to where  
The back door opened, and went in,  
And turned and shet the door ag'in,  
And maybe *locked* it—couldn't swear,—  
A woman's arms around me makes  
Me liable to make mistakes.—  
I read a marriage license nex',  
But as I didn't have my specs  
I jest *inferred* it was all right,  
And tied the knot so mortal-tight  
That Patience and my old friend John  
Was safe enough from that time on!

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

Well, now, I might go on and tell  
How all the joke at last leaked out,  
And how the youngsters raised the yell  
And rode the happy groom about  
Upon their shoulders; how the bride  
Was kissed a hundred times beside  
The one *I* give her,—tel she cried  
And laughed untel she like to died!  
I might go on and tell you all  
About the supper—and the *ball*.—  
You'd ought to see me twist my heel  
Through jest one old Furginny reel  
Afore you die! er tromp the strings  
Of some old fiddle tel she sings  
Some old cowtillion, don't you know,  
That putts the devil in yer toe!

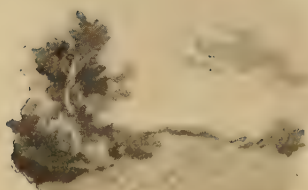
We kep' the dancin' up tel *four*  
O'clock, I reckon—maybe more.—  
We hardly heerd the thunders roar,  
Er *thought* about the *storm* that blowed—  
*And them two fellers on the road!*  
Tel all at onc't we heerd the door  
Bu'st open, and a voice that *swore*,—  
And old Jeff Thompson tuck the floor.

## SQUIRE HAWKINS'S STORY

He shuck hisse'f and looked around  
Like some old dog about half-drowned—  
*His hat, I reckon, weighed ten pound*  
To say the least, and I'll say, *shore,*  
*His overcoat weighed fifty more—*  
*The wettest man you ever saw,*  
*To have so dry a son-in-law!*

He sized it all; and Patience laid  
Her hand in John's, and looked afraid,  
And waited. And a stiller set  
O' folks, I *know*, you never met  
In any court room, where with dread  
They wait to hear a verdick read.

The old man turned his eyes on me:  
“And have you married 'em?” says hé.  
I nodded “Yes.” “Well, that'll do,”  
He says, “and now we're th'ough with *you,—*  
*You jest clear out, and I decide*  
*And promise to be satisfied!”*  
He hadn't nothin' more to say.  
I saw, of course, how matters lay,  
And left. But as I rode away  
I heerd the roosters crow fer day.



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